

28 February 2020

To whom it may concern,

This morning, it came to my attention that the PAE Site Manager for VFC-111, Exemption (6), has provided unlawful direction to PAE maintenance personnel in violation of the NAMP and the GOPs. On Feb 13, 2020, Exemption (6) intimidated employees with threats of termination for documenting downing discrepancies of aircraft 104 with a valid, "downing" work order. Exemption (6) directed and intimidated Maintenance Control to delete that work order, and they complied. Exemption (6) then threatened to fire employees who refused his unlawful direction to perform an unauthorized repair by modifying a part for the same aircraft. Exemption (6) appears to be pre-occupied with reporting "up" aircraft rather than ensuring the aircraft are actually "up," and he's willing to bully his way toward that end without regard to the safety of VFC-111 pilots.

Thankfully - with the exception of Maintenance Control in deleting the work order - the maintenance personnel have stood up to Exemption (6) threats so far, but many of them are shaken by the unlawful direction, intimidation, and threats when they do the right thing. It will not be long before he has cowed the employees into complying with his unlawful directions. Should this kind of thing be allowed to continue, there is no question the squadron is headed for a major mishap. If the squadron's leadership knows about this, they haven't taken any action I am aware of. If they're not publicly taking action, then it appears they, like the last Skipper, encourage and condone Exemption (6) unlawful actions.

I am also unsure of what to do with this information because the VFC-111 Maintenance Officer was recently grounded, and Exemption (6) threw him out of the squadron on trumped up charges for bringing this sort of information to the attention of the Skipper, the Admiral, and the IG. Based on the way they treated the last whistleblower, I don't see any member of VFC-111, TSW, CNAFR, or PAE I can turn to in reporting these actions without risking a similar fate.

- I request the IG investigate the trend of falsifying maintenance records and maintenance malpractice by PAE from April of 2019 through the present.
- I request the IG investigate Mr. Renfro's unlawful direction, intimidation, and threats toward PAE employees from April of 2019 through the present and its effect on maintenance in compliance with the NAMP and GOPs.
- I request the IG investigate the extent of VFC-111, TSW and CNAFR leadership's complicity, either through commission or omission, in the maintenance malpractice from April of 2019 through the present.
- I request the IG encourage PAE to place Exemption (6) on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation.
- Finally, I request the IG recommend to CNAFR an immediate Safety Stand Down with VFC-111, VFC-13, and PAE to discuss how maintenance malpractice and toxic leadership such as this will cause serious mishaps.

I've attached the anonymous statements from PAE maintainers concerning these actions to this report. I'd like to sign my name to this, but my job is too important to me and my family to lose.

Sincerely,
Anonymous

This document is part of a Department of Defense, Office of the Inspector General (DoD OIG) file and may contain information that could identify an IG source.



VFC-111 ASAP Report Comments

01 NOV 19 - 28 FEB 20

1	1528102	14 FEB 20	VFC-111	MX Personnel	F-5N
		Compliance	Gun-decking Documentation	HAZREP: N	
When maintainers find discrepancies on aircraft, they need to have the ability to write "down gripe" MAF's, without fear of punishment or that the MAF(s) will be deleted. A/C 104 experienced a positive over G condition and during the over stress inspection, it was discovered that the Trailing edge portion of the wing was loose with visible working Jo-bolts. The maintainer wrote a MAF to identify and correct the discrepancy. The MAF was then deleted, per management direction and the individual was threatened with punitive action, for simply doing what every maintainer should do, when they find a downing condition on an aircraft. Maintainers need to have the jurisdiction and ability to do their jobs without fear of punishment or that the discrepancy will be simply brushed under the rug, and deleted.					
2	1528210	14 FEB 20	VFC-111	MX Personnel	F-5N
		Compliance	Gun-decking Documentation	HAZREP: N	
After completion of an Overstress Inspection, a new Work Order(WO) was written for findings of a damaged part on the wing during 1st Shift. Mr. Renfro(Site Manager) then instructed the 2nd Shift Maintenance Controllers to delete the new WO that was labeling the A/C in a down status creating an UNSAFE work environment and A/C condition. The new WO was referenced in the signoff of the inspection MAF.					
3	1528456	14 FEB 20	VFC-111	MX Personnel	F-5N
		Unsafe Practices	Poor or No Guidance	HAZREP: N	
I was informed today that Mike Renfro was upset that aircraft 104 was down and not only instructed maintenance control to delete the mafs, he also got upset at the employee that found the discrepancy. There was an overstress inspection on 104. As the employee was inspecting the wing, he noticed a piece that was unusually loose. He then downed the aircraft and cut a discrepancy. From what I was told, Mike brought a supervisor in and told him he wanted to write up the employee because nothing in the inspection instructed him to check that portion of the wing. He makes the impression that it is not ok to look at anything unless it is specifically mentioned in the instruction. The employee did the right thing by pointing out a discrepancy. Mike was more concerned about having to report a down aircraft and tried to take it out on this employee. Just because the formal write up never happened, this employee is still aware of the situation and is now on edge. In my opinion, this is just yet another problem from site management. This time it effects the safety of all aircrew.					
4	1528839	14 FEB 20	VFC-111	MX Personnel	F-5N
		Unsafe Practices	Poor or No Guidance	HAZREP: N	
Thursday feb 13 A/C 104 came back from event 7a with a 7.7 overstress. During the airframe overstress inspection the port wing tip trailing edge honeycomb section was found to be loose. Actually moving up and down and make and cracking noise, (video taken). a downing discrepancy was cut at app 1330 MCN 45d74y9/JCN kh3044430. Day shift departed at 1430 after briefing nights on the discrepancy. When day crew arrived Friday morning 14 feb. It was noticed that A/C 104 was in the up status. Upon further inspection it was discovered that the for mentioned WO was deleted, as directed by the Site Manager. Mike Renfro. M/C cut a new discrepancy, MCN 45D74YC/JCN KH3045432, after discovering the WO was deleted and not signed off. This cannot happen, if day check would have not taken any action to rewrite this downing discrepancy the potential is unthinkable. The judgement of the site manager needs to be addressed before mistakes made are uncorrectable. This must not happen					
5	1528893	14 FEB 20	VFC-111	MX Personnel	F-5N
		Compliance	Gun-decking Documentation	HAZREP: N	
came into work and found out that the site manager had upped a aircraft that should of been down.					
6	1530495	21 FEB 20	VFC-111	MX Personnel	F-5N
		Compliance	Cutting Corners	HAZREP: N	
I was informed of a situation today that airframes was told by the site manager to modify a part to fix 104's wings. this is an unauthorized repair. When they told Mike Renfro this, he threatened to fire them if the did not comply. They called his bluff and did not comply, and the correct part came in shortly after.					